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171507Z Sep 03

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 001891

SIPDIS

NOFORN

DEPT. FOR AF/KANSTEINER, AF/S/DELISI  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER  
PRETORIA FOR AMBASSADOR HUME

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/17/2013

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [Z1](#)

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SECRET CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS

REF: HARARE 1719

Classified By: Political Officer Win Dayton under Sections 1.5(b)(d)

[1](#)1. CONFIDENTIAL/NOFORN -- PLEASE DO NOT DIVULGE TO OFFICIALS  
OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

[1](#)2. (C) In a meeting in his law office September 16, MDC  
Secretary General Welshman Ncube told Ambassador Sullivan

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that he was scheduled to meet with Justice Minister Patrick  
Chinamasa September 21-24, after Chinamasa returned from WTO  
meetings in Cancun and before he left town again on the 25th.

He said they intended to go over the latest draft of the  
Constitution, transitional issues, and confidence-building  
measures (combatting violence, reining in militias, etc.).  
Ncube's comments at the meeting on the MDC's SADC outreach,  
the bishops' initiative, The Daily News, and a Harvard  
negotiating workshop are reported septel.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: The interparty constitutional talks remain  
largely outside the public eye, although reports of the talks  
are growing in circulation among selected interested parties.  
Nonetheless, confidentiality will remain a sine qua non of  
the talk's chances for any success as the principals  
continue to engage constructively on significant issues. As  
related reftel, the fragile discussions have come far but  
have a long way to go, and may be entering a particularly  
precarious phase as the parties begin to delve into more  
controversial issues. In particular, "confidence-building  
measures" would appear to depart from a strictly legal agenda  
and drift into potentially more parlous political waters  
heretofore carefully avoided.  
SULLIVAN